



**Our Father Among the Saints Sabbas,  
Archbishop of Serbia,  
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates on January 14.**

Saint Sabbas (Savva), the first Archbishop and teacher of the Serbs, and the most beloved of all the Saints of Serbia, was born in 1169, and was named Rastko by his parents. He was the son of Stephen Nemanja, the ruler of Serbia, who is better known as Saint Symeon the Myrrh-streamer (see Feb. 23). As a young man, Rastko fled secretly to the Holy Mountain, Athos, to the Monastery of Saint Panteleimon. When his father learned of his flight, he sent soldiers after him. Before they could seize him, he was tonsured a monk with the name of Sabbas, after Saint Sabbas the Sanctified (celebrated Dec. 5). Soon after, he entered monastery of Vatopedi, where his father joined him in 1197. Together they rebuilt the Monastery of Hilandar and made it a great spiritual center for their countrymen. In 1200 Saint Symeon reposed, and his body became a source of holy myrrh; in 1204 Saint Sabbas was compelled to return to Serbia with his father's relics, that he might restore peace between his two brothers, who were struggling over the rule of the kingdom. The grace of Saint Symeon's relics, and the mediations of Saint Sabbas, healed the division between his brethren. After persuading the Emperor in Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarch to grant

autocephaly to the Serbian Church, the Saint against his will was ordained first Archbishop of his native land in 1219, where he labored diligently to establish the Orthodox Faith. In 1221 he crowned his brother Stephen first King of Serbia (the memory of Saint Stephen, First Crowned King of Serbia, is kept on September 24.) In 1234, foreseeing by divine grace his coming departure to the Lord, he resigned the archiepiscopal throne, named his disciple Arsenius as his successor, and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Mount Sinai; while returning through Bulgaria, he fell asleep in peace in 1236. Because he has been ever since the national hero of Serbia and an invincible bulwark strengthening the Orthodox Faith, the Moslem Turks burned his incorrupt relics in the year 1594. See also June 28.

Saint Sabbas is noted for his motto, “Give up everything for Christ, but Christ for nothing!” (Ed.)

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Saint Stephen, First Crowned King of Serbia

Courtesy Dechani Monastery.



*Dismissal Hymn. First Tone*

**W**HEN Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest; for the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the certainty of the word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and hast enlightened the world, glory be to Thee.

*Dismissal Hymn of the Saint. Third Tone*

**T**HOU wast a guide of the way that leadeth to life, and a first prelate and teacher; for thou wast to enlighten thy fatherland, O saint Sabbas, having given it rebirth in the Holy Spirit. Thou didst plant thy sanctified children like olive trees in the spiritual Paradise. Wherefore, as we honour thee as an equal of the Apostles and holy hierarchs, we implore thee: Pray to Christ God to grant us great mercy.

*Kontakion. Fourth Tone*  
*The Original Melody*

**O**N this day Thou hast appeared \* unto the whole world, \* and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, \* is signed on us who sing Thy praise \* and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, \* Thou hast appeared, \* O Thou Light unapproachable.

*Kontakion of the Saint*  
*Plagal of Fourth Tone*

**T**HE Church of thy people glorifieth thee as her first great prelate and a companion of the Apostles, O Saint. But since thou hast boldness with Christ God, by thy prayers save us from all harm that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, O divinely-wise Father Sabbas.